

Program Information for Cuba Educational Seminar Summer 2013

*Please review all the information on this page.
You are responsible for its content*

If you are currently enrolled in a CGE semester abroad program, or have previously participated in a CGE program abroad, there is very little additional paperwork you need to do (see Required Forms below). The only other thing we need from you to apply for the program is a **Statement of Intent**, telling us why you would like to go on this program, with a **\$100 deposit** (credit cards are fine!). This non-refundable deposit will be applied as a credit to your program expenses.

Please send all required documents to Margaret Anderson at anderso4@augsborg.edu by **April 1**.
You should also check with your home school study abroad office to see what, if any, requirements there might be for summer study programs.

Cost of the trip to Cuba alone is \$2,448. This includes tuition for one course, and full room and board. It does not cover travel to/from Havana or the cost of required texts. If you choose to participate only in the travel portion of the course you will need to connect to class sessions on-line via Skype.

You may also travel to Mexico for two weeks before the trip to Cuba to participate in class sessions on-site. For two additional weeks in Mexico, along with the trip to Cuba, the cost is \$2,695.

[Blog from Spring 2013 Semester Programs](#)

Academic Information

Required Forms

- [Statement of Intent](#)
- [Billing and Payment Information](#)
- [Course Registration](#)
- [Waiver and Release of Liability form](#)
- [Behavioral Contract](#)

[Course Syllabus](#)

[Required Texts & Pre-trip Reading](#)

General Information

[Health Information](#)

[Travel & Documentation](#)

[What to Pack](#)

[Money](#)

[Locale & Accommodations](#)

[Safety & Security](#)

Payment and Credit Information

PAYMENT

There are several options for payment of program fees. If you are a student, please check with your Study Abroad Office, Financial Aid Office, or Student Accounts to verify which arrangement your school prefers:

- You pay your home school, and they pay Augsburg College
- Split billing: two or more separate parties are splitting the program fees
- You are billed directly and pay Augsburg College all program fees

Name: _____

Please indicate below to whom the bill(s) should be sent:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone Number: _____

Please indicate below to whom the bill(s) should be sent:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone Number: _____

TRANSFER OF CREDIT

Grades are not automatically sent to your school. You need to request that a transcript be sent to your school, as Federal law prohibits Augsburg from releasing an official academic transcript without your written consent. A "Transcript Request Form" is included in your welcome packet or may be downloaded at <http://wptest.augsburg.edu/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/TransReq.pdf>. This form must be completed and returned to the Center's office in Minneapolis.

**Please return this form to: The Center for Global to: Margaret Anderson, Augsburg College, Campus Box 307,
2211 Riverside Ave., Minneapolis, MN 55454.**

[Return to top](#)

Cuba Seminar Course Registration Information

You may take the seminar in Cube for credit in one of the following disciplines (please choose one):

Dept/ #/Section	Title
HIS 440 CBA (History)	Topics in History: Seminar on Contemporary History, Culture and Political Change in Cuba
POL 459 CBA (Political Science)	Topics in Comparative Politics: Seminar on Contemporary History, Culture and Political Change in Cuba
LCS 495 CBA (Language & Cross-Cultural Studies)	Topics in Cross-Cultural Studies: Seminar on Contemporary History, Culture and Political Change in Cuba”
SPA 295 CBA (Spanish)	Topics in Culture: Seminar on Contemporary History, Culture and Political Change in Cuba

[Return to top](#)

SUMMER SESSION REGISTRATION FORM

Name	Augsburg ID#	Social Security Number

Last
First
Middle
If you are not an Augsburg student, do not use your home school ID

Dept/Course#	Section	Grade Option	Course Title

*** GRADE OPTIONS:** P = Pass/No Credit; T = Traditional; V = Audit (If you leave this space blank, your grade option will default to Traditional)

You may only select the P/NC grading option if you have first received approval from your home school. Some schools will not accept Pass/No Credit grades as transfer credit, and grade options cannot be changed after the program is completed.

Student Signature	Date
Margaret Anderson Coordinator for Academic Programs Abroad	Date

REGISTRAR'S OFFICE USE ONLY

Center for Global Education at Augsburg College

Agreement and Release of Liability

(Read carefully before signing)

Name _____

Program _____ Dates _____

1. I, _____ ("Registrant") have applied and intend to participate in a "Program" offered and/or coordinated by the Center for Global Education ("Center") at Augsburg College, ("College").
2. I have voluntarily enrolled in a travel program which includes travel outside the United States of America to _____ and possibly other countries. I have made a deposit that has been paid to the Center and/or cooperating agencies or organizations to apply against the costs of transportation, housing and other goods and services to be arranged for me by the Center and/or cooperating agencies or organizations.
3. I understand and am aware that my participation in the Program may expose me to special risks and dangers, including but not limited to, the hazards of travel by various means of conveyance; the hazards of politically unstable areas, the dangers of civil disturbances and war; the forces of nature; unfamiliar or different terrain, language, climate, food and drink, customs, social and sexual mores, safety practices and regulations, communications, criminal activity, law enforcement activity, disability access, road conditions, driving practices, disease risks, and health care; acts or omissions of the College, the Center, and/or their respective agents, employees, officers, directors, associates, affiliated companies, subcontractors, or cooperating agencies or organizations; and accidents or illness in places without access to medical facilities, transportation, and/or means of rapid evacuation or assistance. I understand that it is my responsibility to research and evaluate the risks I may face in this Program and I voluntarily assume any risk and liability.
4. I am aware that my participation in the Program and my use of transportation, housing and dining services, and other goods and services in connection with my participation in the Program carry a risk of serious personal injury, serious illness, death and property damage or loss. I expressly and voluntarily assume all risk of injury, illness, death and property damage or loss that may result from my participation in the Program and/or my use of goods and services in connection with my participation in the Program.
5. In consideration for being permitted to participate in the Program, I hereby **RELEASE AND DISCHARGE** the College, the Center, and their respective agents, employees, officers, directors, associates, affiliated companies, subcontractors, or cooperating agencies and organizations ("the Released Parties") from any and all liability for injury, illness, death, damage or property damage or loss arising out of the arrangement or provision of transportation, housing, dining or other goods and services, or arising out of any other activity incident to my participation in the program.
6. I agree not to sue or make claim against the Released Parties for injury, illness, death, damage or loss sustained as a result of participation in the Program or the use of the goods and services in connection with my participation in the Program. I will indemnify and hold harmless the Released Parties from all claims, judgments, and costs, including attorneys' fees, incurred in connection with any action relating to my participation in the Program. I also agree to reimburse the College or Center for any sums the College or Center may advance for the purchase of goods or services on my behalf in connection with my participation in the Program. I accept all responsibility for loss or additional expenses, including, but not limited to travel, lodging, meals, personal and other program related expense, due to delays or other unforeseen causes.
7. In the event that this program is cancelled during any portion of it due to unforeseen circumstances (e.g. political unrest, natural disaster, acts of terrorism or other unforeseen circumstances), I understand that I will only receive reimbursement for any recoverable costs. I agree that if I remain in the foreign country after receiving notice of the cancellation of the program that:, a.) I am responsible for my own care and safety, as Augsburg College or the Center will have no liability for my care and safety after I leave the Program;

(Over)

c.) I accept all responsibility for loss or additional expenses, including, but not limited to transportation and return travel, lodging, meals, personal and other program related expenses, or any other services to me in connection with remaining in the foreign country.

8. I further agree to abide by all applicable rules and regulations of the College, the Center, and its staff, representatives or designees, all instructions of its staff, representatives or designees while participating in the program and the laws of the governmental jurisdictions at the place or places of program offering. I understand that noncompliance may result in expulsion from the Program and forfeiture of Program fees. I agree that if I violate any applicable rule, regulation, instruction or law at any time during the Program I may be sent home immediately at my own expense. I agree to reimburse the College and Center for any and all costs associated with sending me home. I agree to indemnify and hold harmless the Released Parties from all claims or losses resulting from my failure to abide by such rules, instructions and laws. I further agree that the College, the Center, and/or their respective staff, faculty, representatives or designees may send me home at any time during the program if they determine that my continued participation in the Program will adversely affect my health, safety or welfare or the health, safety, welfare or enjoyment of other Program participants.
9. I agree that if I leave the course prior to its completion due to my own circumstances that: a.) I will provide the program advance written notice of my intention to leave the program; b.) I am responsible for my own care and safety, as Augsburg College and/or the Center will have no liability for my care and safety after I leave the Program or if the Program is cancelled; c.) I accept all responsibility for loss or additional expenses, including, but not limited to transportation and return travel, lodging, meals, personal and other program related expenses, or any other services to me in connection with my early departure.
10. I understand the College and/or Center may notify the person or persons that I have listed as an emergency contact in the event that I become seriously ill or am involved in an emergency situation during the Program. In the event that I am unable to make my own medical decisions, the College and/or Center representative may have to make those on my behalf.
11. Sickness and accident insurance is provided for the program for which you are participating. This program does not coverage routine medical care or prescription drugs. The College's insurance program also does not cover disability, personal property, or loss or damage to any personal property including any fees paid to the program. I understand that if I desire insurance coverage or protection of any of the categories listed above as not being covered by the College program, it is my responsibility to procure it on my own behalf. The College and/or Center assumes no responsibility for insurance coverage or protection for the categories stated as "not provided" for.
12. Should any of the provisions of this Agreement and Release, or portions thereof, be found to be invalid by any court of competent jurisdiction, the remainder of this Agreement and Release shall nonetheless remain in full force and effect. This Agreement and Release shall be construed under the laws of the State of Minnesota.
13. I understand that I assume full responsibility for any undisclosed physical, mental or emotional issues which might impair my ability to complete the program. If I do not make medical and psychological needs known in a timely manner, this may delay or cancel my participation in the program, if reasonable accommodations can not be made in a timely manner.

I HAVE CAREFULLY READ THIS AGREEMENT AND RELEASE AND FULLY UNDERSTAND ITS CONTENTS. I SIGN IT OF MY OWN FREE WILL.

REGISTRANT'S SIGNATURE

DATE

REGISTRANT'S NAME AND DATE OF BIRTH (please print)

[Return to top](#)

CENTER FOR GLOBAL EDUCATION (CGE) STUDY ABROAD BEHAVIOR CONTRACT

Augsburg College’s Center for Global Education Study Abroad programs are designed to promote academic excellence through blending experiential and classroom learning; these programs allow you to be immersed in the host country’s culture. They are also designed to provide a safe learning environment, one in which all students will grow and learn. When you choose to deviate from the program’s rules, there are consequences for such actions.

Failure to conform to Augsburg and Study Abroad program rules will be handled by a disciplinary committee chaired by the CGE faculty and staff in country. If the offense warrants expulsion from the program, you will be responsible for all expenses including return airfare.

Offenses that may result in dismissal from the program include:

- Use of illegal drugs
- Drunk and disorderly conduct
- Repeated abuse of alcohol
- Sexual harassment
- Assault
- Making threats against another individual
- Theft
- Use of abusive language
- Attending specific bars and nightclubs that you have been warned against for safety reasons
- Failure to inform the appropriate CGE staff regarding travel plans
- Failure to attend classes and other program activities
- Failure to obey guidelines related to housing and home stays
- Any violation of any local law

Contract:

I understand the general safety and security guidelines as well as the behavioral guidelines and policies of Augsburg College’s Center for Global Education, as indicated in this form and the program manual. I understand that the specific rules of this contract will be required for all participants in Augsburg’s CGE study abroad programs.

I understand that if I choose to stay later than the established program dates, I will be responsible for all travel arrangements and any additional expenses.

I understand that my failure to comply with any part of this agreement constitutes grounds for potential suspension or dismissal from the program and that, upon the recommendation of the Center for Global Education staff, I may be sent home at my own expense.

STUDENT SIGNATURE

PRINTED NAME

DATE

(FOR OFFICE USE ONLY: DATE RECEIVED)

[Return to top](#)

Course Syllabus for a Course in Cuba – Summer Session I, 2013
**HIS 440, LCS 495, POL 459, or SPA 295: “Seminar on Contemporary History,
Culture and Political Change in Cuba”**

Instructor: Ann Lutterman-Aguilar with Cuban educators

Cross Listing: This course is cross-listed in the following four disciplines: 1) History, 2) Languages and Cross-Cultural Studies, 3) Political Science, and 4) Spanish. You must choose ONE of these disciplines. Please note that POL 459 counts as an elective towards the International Relations major or minor at Augsburg College.

Notes for Spanish and LCS majors and minors at Augsburg College: If you are a Spanish **minor**, please note that this course does NOT count towards the Spanish minor at Augsburg because it is not taught exclusively in Spanish. However, if you are a Spanish **major**, you are allowed to take two out of nine courses in English (although four must be taken in Minneapolis). Therefore, if you register for SPA 295, this could count as an *elective* for your major if you haven't already taken two Spanish courses in English. If you are a Cross-Cultural Studies major, this course will count as an elective in LCS.

Course Description: This course will examine key issues in Cuban history, culture and politics in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Particular attention will be given to the post-revolutionary period of 1959 to the present. We will examine debates about the positive and negative consequences of the Cuban revolution, as well as U.S.-Cuban relations and the pros and cons of the U.S. embargo against Cuba. During the courses' 9-day trip to Cuba, we will meet with a wide range of Cubans to learn about contemporary history, culture and politics with a special emphasis on U.S.-Cuba relations. We will meet with people who are pro-Castro as well as with dissidents and U.S. government representatives in Cuba.

Languages of Instruction: The course will be taught in English and Spanish, as almost all of the guest speakers in Cuba will speak in Spanish, while the primary texts are in English. Students who are taking the course for SPA 295 credit for the Spanish major will need to complete assignments in Spanish. Other students may complete all assignments in English.

Required Readings

Sweig, Julia E. *Cuba: What Everyone Needs to Know*. Oxford University Press, 2009. (A nice feature of this book is that it not only covers Cuban history from the time of the Spanish American War to the Cuban Revolution but is also pretty up to date, providing an analysis of political issues in Cuba since 2006 when Castro transferred provisional power to his brother.)

Huddleston, Vicki and Carlos Pascual. *Learning to Salsa: New Steps in U.S.-Cuba Relations*. Brookings Institute, 2010. (This recently published book about U.S.-Cuba relations was written by two long-term U.S. diplomats: Vicki Huddleston and Carlos Pascual. Vicki Huddleston was the chief U.S. diplomat in Cuba from 1999 to 2002.)

In addition, excerpts will be assigned from the following book:

Chomsky, Aviva, Barry Carr, et al, eds. *The Cuba Reader: History, Culture, Politics*. Duke University Press, 2004. (What is nice about this book is that it presents diverging viewpoints, as well as poetry, songs, and excerpts from Cuban Literature. Since this is a very long text, we would only require excerpts from it rather than the entire book.)

Course Rationale and Overview: Is Cuba a living hell, a utopian paradise, or neither? It has been characterized as both by people from opposing political perspectives and has been the source of great controversy within the United States since the revolution of 1959 when Fidel Castro took power. Therefore, this course will enable you to read about Cuban history, culture, and politics from the early 1900s to the present and engage in current debates about U.S. foreign policy towards Cuba. By participating in a nine-day experiential seminar in Cuba, where you will meet directly with a wide range of Cubans, as well as U.S. government representatives in Cuba, you will be better equipped able to develop and articulate your own political positions on these debates. You will also gain an appreciation for the diversity and richness of the many cultures of contemporary Cuba.

Teaching Methodology: Teaching strategies include group discussions of required readings and experiences; films; artwork and music which express course-related themes; and numerous field trips and guest lectures and/or conversations with a wide range of Cubans expressing diverse viewpoints. We will meet with a wide range of Cubans to learn about contemporary history, culture and politics with a special emphasis on U.S.-Cuba relations. We will meet with people who are pro-Castro as well as with dissidents and U.S. government representatives in Cuba.

Particular attention is given to story-telling, particularly by Cubans whose voices have been marginalized. Due to the fact that approximately half of class time is spent listening to guest speakers, you are encouraged to develop your strategic questioning and listening skills. It is very important that you ask informed questions and share your own interests, opinions, and experiences with speakers so that they are not just educational consumers but partners in a common quest to learn more about key issues facing Cuba and the United States today.

During internal class discussion sessions (those not involving guest lectures or excursions), I will try to apply principles of experiential, critical, and feminist pedagogies by encouraging you to reflect upon both cognitive and affective learning and to draw upon your own prior life experiences, as well as new experiences in Cuba.

Course Requirements (100%)

1. **Class Participation (20%):** Effective class participation includes attendance and active participation in all sessions in Cuba, as well as in pre-trip and post-trip class sessions, which will be conducted via internet for those who are not in Mexico.. *Please note that class participation is required for a passing grade.* Because participation is essential to the learning process, if you have to miss any course sessions as a result of illness or for any other reason, you must speak to me prior to the session. You are also responsible for obtaining notes, handouts, and announcements from other students if you arrive late to class or miss a class session.
2. **Exam #1 (20%):** Prior to the trip, you will take an on-line exam in which you demonstrate your knowledge of Cuban political history. You will be given a handout with details in advance. **Exam date: Day before departure for Cuba.**
3. **Blog & Photo-Essay (20%)** During and after the trip to Cuba, each student will be expected to design blog entries about specific speakers and excursions of interest to share what you are seeing, hearing, and experiencing in Cuba. By doing so, you will develop a collective photo essay that documents your learning and shares your experiences with others back home. You will be given a handout with details and ethical guidelines in advance. **Blogs deadlines: to be determined by trip schedule.**
4. **Exam #2 (20%):** After the trip, you will complete an on-line exam in which you will discuss the history of U.S.-Cuban relations in light of required texts and your experiences in Cuba. . You will be given a handout with details in advance. **Exam date: 2 weeks after trip.**

5. **Final Project & Presentation 20%):** After the trip, you will design a project that enables you to educate others about what you learned in Cuba. Your project must focus on a theme related to the discipline for which you are receiving credit for the course (ie., history, political science, cross-cultural studies, Spanish). You will be given a handout with details in advance. **Project Deadline: 3 weeks after trip.**

You will be given more detailed information about each assignment and a schedule of required readings, class discussion topics, and assignments on the first day of class.

Grade	Number	Percentage	Augsburg Definition
A	4.0	93-100%	Achieves highest standards of excellence
A-/B+	3.5	88-92%	
B	3.0	83-87%	Achieves above basic course standards
B-/C+	2.5	78-82%	
C	2.0	73-77%	Meets basic standards for the course
C-/D+	1.5	68-72%	
D	1.0	63-67%	Performance below basic course standards
D-	0.5	60-62%	
F	0.0	Under 60%	Unacceptable performance (no credit for the course)

Grading Policy & Late Assignments: You must submit assignments on time. If you need an extension, you must talk to us **in advance** to negotiate a new deadline. If you have not been given an extension in advance and you turn in a late assignment, you will be docked half a grade (from a 4.0 to a 3.5 or 3.5 to a 3.0, 3.0 to a 2.5, 2.5 to a 2.0, etc.) If you are more than one week late, you will be docked a full grade. No assignments will be accepted more than two weeks after the original deadline; a “0” will be given after that. Assignments due near the end of the semester will not be accepted after the last day of the semester.

Augsburg Honesty Policy: You are expected to follow the Augsburg Honesty Policy which is printed in the program manual. We assume that you have read the honesty policy, understand it, and are following it. Except when the assignment expressly encourages group work, it is assumed that all course work will be your own. You may not copy other students’ work. The first occurrence of plagiarism will result in the failure of the assignment. A student who commits plagiarism a second time will fail the course.

Students’ Rights & Responsibilities: Students with formally diagnosed learning or physical differences have legal rights to course modifications. Those who qualify should identify themselves to the instructor as soon as possible in order to obtain extra assistance.

Information about the Trip to Cuba: The trip to Cuba is one week after the spring CGE semester programs end, which means students on those programs have one week to complete initial readings and exam one before the trip. You can depart from Mexico, Central America, or the U.S. The cost of the course is US \$1,900 and includes tuition for a full course and all expenses WITHIN Cuba. However, you must make your own travel arrangements to and from Cuba and pay for your own plane tickets.

You may register for the Cuba course as one of the two courses in the Mexico Summer Session I (along with a Spanish course, internship, or independent study). However, you are not obligated to do so. Students who do not come to Mexico can participate in pre-trip and post-trip sessions via the internet.

[Return to top](#)

Texts & Pre-Trip Readings

You will need to purchase the following two books:

Sweig, Julia E. *Cuba: What Everyone Needs to Know*. Oxford University Press, 2009.

A nice feature of this book is that it not only covers Cuban history from the time of the Spanish American War to the Cuban Revolution but is also pretty up to date, providing an analysis of political issues in Cuba since 2006 when Castro transferred provisional power to his brother.

Huddleston, Vicki and Carlos Pascual. *Learning to Salsa: New Steps in U.S.-Cuba Relations*. Brookings Institute, 2010.

This recently published book about U.S.-Cuba relations was written by two long-term U.S. diplomats: Vicki Huddleston and Carlos Pascual. Vicki Huddleston was the chief U.S. diplomat in Cuba from 1999 to 2002. We will also be using excerpts from the Noam Chomsky book, *The Cuba Reader: History, Culture, Politics*. However, you don't need to purchase it UNLESS you want your own copy.

Recommended Pre-trip Reading: <http://web.augsburg.edu/global/spadocs/ereader.pdf>

[Return to top](#)

Health & Safety Information

Health: Review your vaccinations: Check with your doctor or the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) regarding recommended vaccinations for travel to Cuba. Currently, the CDC requires no vaccinations to enter and recommends that you be up-to-date on routine vaccines like diphtheria-tetanus and measles, and that you consider a Hepatitis A vaccine. You may call the CDC at 404/332-4559 or visit their website at <http://www.cdc.gov/travel/>

- Bring enough medical/health supplies. If you take a prescription or medication, make sure you bring enough to last your entire seminar, including a possible day or two of delay. Be prepared, and bring medical and health supplies for potential problems. Many medications, including common over-the-counter items, may not be readily available. Bring everything in its original, labeled bottle.
- Drink only purified water. It is best to drink bottled water or water from trusted sources. You will be provided with purified water during your seminar. Don't forget to use purified water when you brush your teeth. Avoid ice cubes.
- Drink enough water. Besides drinking contaminated water, the most common health problem on travel seminars is not drinking enough water and getting dehydrated and/or constipated.
- Wash your hands with soap whenever possible or use hand sanitizer when soap and water is not available. Clean food and water can be contaminated by dirty hands.
- Watch your food. Eat meat, fish and vegetables only if they are well cooked, and avoid salads unless the greens have been washed with purified water. Fruit that you peel is the safest. CGE staff will give you more information on safe eating and drinking habits.
- Pace yourself. While strenuous walking is not a regular part of any travel seminar, there may be an occasion when a long walk is necessary to reach a certain location. Varying road conditions make anticipating this walk impossible, although CGE staff will keep you informed whenever possible. If a particular health condition makes strenuous walking a concern, please be prepared to communicate your limitations with your group leader and CGE staff.
- Be aware of your environment. The pollution in most large cities can be very bad. This tends to be especially true during the dry season (May to October). If you have a history of allergies, other respiratory illness or heart problems, you could experience complications during your stay. If you use any type of medication for these problems, be sure to bring an adequate amount after consulting your doctor.
- If you get sick, please let your trip leader or CGE staff know right away. This will help to pinpoint problems with food and water, and help you to get better and arrange a visit to a doctor or medical clinic if necessary.

Possible Ailments:

Traveler's Diarrhea: Just the change in food, water and climate can lead to an upset stomach. If you get diarrhea, treat it with Pepto-Bismol and drink lots of water. When you are ready to eat again, start with rice, bread, crackers, and broth (bring bouillon cubes or dry soup). Imodium (Loperamide is the generic equivalent) is a stronger medication to be used only when absolutely necessary. It does not cure the diarrhea but slows down the digestive system, which can lead to other problems. Some herbal teas are thought to aid in the prevention and treatment of diarrhea such as ginger root, raspberry, comfrey, and peppermint – feel free to bring some tea bags with you.

Hepatitis A: Studies have shown that many cases of travel-related Hepatitis A happen to travelers in developing countries with "standard" itineraries, accommodations, and food consumption behavior.

Malaria: Malaria is a mosquito-borne illness that is present in parts of the Caribbean but not known to be a current problem in Cuba.

Dengue Fever: This disease is primarily an urban viral infection transmitted by mosquitoes. Since there is no preventative medicine for dengue fever, take measures to avoid mosquito bites such as using DEET repellent and keeping your arms and legs covered.

Typhoid: Typhoid Fever is a bacterial infection transmitted through contaminated food and/or water, or directly between people. The CDC recommends a typhoid vaccination for those traveling to tropical areas or staying long term (more than six weeks).

Medical Insurance

All travelers to Cuba are required by the Cuban government to have Cuban medical insurance coverage during your stay. For travelers on the charter flights from Miami and New York, the cost for this coverage is included within the airfare charge. For travelers on flights from Cancun, Nassau or from other cities, medical insurance will be available upon landing in Havana at a cost of approximately \$3.30 per day in Cuba.

U.S. health insurance is not recognized in Cuba. That said, included in the program fee, the Center for Global Education at Augsburg College provides participants with international emergency travel assistance through EIIA/AIG Assist (Educational and Institutional Insurance Administrators) insurance. This insurance provides primary coverage for international emergencies and accidents-you do not need any other type of health insurance for the program. The plan covers Accidental Death and Disability, Repatriation of Remains, Emergency Medical Evacuation and Emergency Travel Assistance. This policy does not cover trip cancellation/interruption. Please note there is a \$250 deductible due at the time of emergency medical services.

While the insurance provided will allow you to be reimbursed for charges over the \$250 deductible, it is common to have to pay for medical charges at the time of service. We suggest you ask at the clinic or hospital if they will take your insurance, either the EIIA/AIG insurance or if you have additional personal insurance (such as HealthPartners or Blue Cross). If so, contact the travel assistance number on your insurance card. For cases where they will not, we recommend you bring a credit (not debit) card with you to cover the cost or discuss with your family or emergency contact person how you might arrange to have funds available for such an emergency.

EIIA/AIG ASSIST:

24-Hour Emergency Travel Assistance Services

Policy Number: WR10003936

Name Insured: Augsburg College

For travel insurance outside the U.S. call: (01-713)260-5508 or call collect (713) 260-5508 (713) 260-5508

[Return to top](#)

Travel and Documentation

Flight to Havana

Our staff in Mexico will arrange for purchase of your airline ticket from Mexico City to Havana (the cost will be added to your program fees). If you are coming from the States, you will need to arrive at the Mexico City airport on June 1 in time to meet the students and staff in Mexico so you can fly with them to Cuba, and coordinate your return flight to the States with your arrival in Mexico City from Havana on June 9.

More information about airline tickets, dates and times will be provided later in April.

License and Visa

You will be covered by CGE's educational license. You will be given a copy of this prior to your travel. The Cuban visa is included with your airline ticket.

What to Pack

Packing List & Luggage

Pack lightly. Airlines charge for overweight baggage to Cuba. The accepted amount varies between airlines from 44-66 pounds per person (including carry-on), and the charges per pound over range from \$1-2.

Packing Tips: Be sure to put essential items such as medications, toiletries and camera film (new security equipment at U.S. airports will destroy film in checked luggage) in your carry-on bag in case of a delay or lost luggage.

- Pack comfortable, modest clothing. Cotton slacks, neat blue jeans, t-shirts without logos and button-down shirts are appropriate – shorts, sweat suits, and tank tops or any other revealing clothing are not appropriate for meetings, but may be helpful for times when your group is alone at the guest house..
- Pack lightly. Consider wearing outfits at least twice during the trip. Remember, laundry facilities may be available as well.
- You will be meeting with speakers many days. For church, government, and professional sector visits, pack at least one formal outfit. For men, consider a nice button-down shirt and slacks (ties are not required). For women, a dress, or skirt/slacks and blouse (not a t-shirt) are appropriate.
- Plan to bring items that are lightweight and can be layered in case of temperature or weather changes or air-conditioned rooms.
- Do not bring anything with a camouflage pattern or of a military style.
- CGE strongly recommends leaving expensive jewelry/watches at home.

Essential items to include: No matter the time of year, be sure to bring insect repellent, a flashlight, hand sanitizer and a rain jacket.

Suggested items to include:

- Comfortable walking shoes with a closed toe for rural areas and markets, where there may be mud or biting insects
- Sandals or house shoes for shared bathrooms as well as for health and safety reasons (e.g. scorpions)
- Swimsuit (some trips may visit a lake or pool)
- Sweater, sweatshirt or jacket for cool evenings, air-conditioned rooms
- Rain jacket, poncho, or umbrella

- Ear plugs (if you are a light sleeper)
- Dressier outfit for church or meetings (described above)
- Medications, Toiletries – many common medications and toiletries are not readily available (e.g. tampons, mouthwash, disposable razors); the most common ailments are traveler's diarrhea and motion sickness
- Toilet/tissue paper, tampons and soap
- Sun & insect protection – hat, sunglasses, sunscreen, insect repellent
- Camera, extra batteries, film
- Small flashlight & extra batteries (for dark streets, rural areas)
- Refillable water bottle with a wide mouth that can be easily cleaned
- Power bars or high-protein snacks (especially if you are vegetarian)
- Small backpack or shoulder bag for daytime excursions
- Small bag or luggage that can be used for overnight in-country trips
- Notebook or journal
- Reading material, deck of cards, etc. for waiting times or delays
- Travel clock, watch or other timepiece
- Money belt or neck pouch to hold valuables
- ATM card, credit cards
- Moist towelettes or hand sanitizer
- Two-prong plug adapter (if you are bringing electrical appliances)
- Passport and photocopy of the photo page (pack separately)
- Luggage: Due to luggage capacity restraints for most vehicles in Cuba, please pack as lightly as you can. In general, if you cannot comfortably walk five city blocks with all of your gear, you have packed too much.

[Return to top](#)

Money

Most participants find \$150-\$250 to be sufficient spending money for a two-week seminar to Cuba. Of course, how much you bring should depend on your personal spending habits. Remember that all meals and program expenses are covered in your seminar cost.

Limit: There is a \$179 per day limit (as of April 1, 2008) on expenditures paid directly or indirectly to Cuba or Cuban nationals for transactions ordinarily incidental to travel within Cuba for all licensed individuals including payment of living expenses (such as hotel accommodations) and the acquisition of goods for personal consumption in Cuba (such as meals). However, there is no limit to expenditures that are directly incidental to the activities authorized by the Treasury Department pursuant to the license under which you are traveling. For example, the \$179 limit would not apply to expenditures for a taxi. See shopping section below.

Exchange: Only Convertible Cuban Pesos (CUC) are accepted as payments for goods and services in Cuba. U.S. Dollars (USD) can be exchanged upon entry at the airport or at hotels or banks or Exchange Offices. There is no exchange fee for other currency exchanges – such as for Canadian Dollars or Euros – and we suggest you consider changing your USD into one of these currencies before departing from the U.S. to Cuba. Travelers Checks must be exchanged into CUC as well – sometimes with an additional 3% fee charged for this exchange. It can be difficult and expensive to cash traveler's checks. ATMs are expensive and rarely work with US cards. Plan to bring mostly cash. We strongly encourage you to bring a money belt.

At last update, 1 USD = 1 CUC plus an additional exchange fee of 10% (that is, including the exchange fee 1 USD = .90 CUC. For current information concerning exchange rates from the dollar to the CUC, visit <http://www.xe.com>

Shopping: Persons authorized to travel to Cuba are NOT permitted to purchase merchandise in Cuba. You cannot buy cigars, liquor or handicrafts to bring home with you, for instance. The only exceptions are 'informational materials' for your own use. These include books, periodicals, paintings, sculpture, records, tapes, C.D.s, films, video cassettes, photographs, posters, etchings, lithographs, serigraphs, microfilm, microfiche, and other informational materials. As indicated above, these purchases must be made with Convertible Cuban Pesos (CUC).

Want to know more? See Frommer's section on money in Cuba:
<http://www.frommers.com/destinations/cuba/3173020005.html>

[Return to top](#)

Locale and Accommodations

Weather

The following are average temperatures, not extremes. As in the U.S., weather patterns can vary frequently. We recommend checking weather sites on the internet for the region and time of year you will be traveling. From November to April, the temperature averages 75-80 F. From June to August, the range is about 85-90 F. The warmest weather is in the eastern part of the island (Santiago). Rainy season is May-October. Bring a light sweater or jacket anyway for the occasional cool evening or restaurant.

Accommodations & Electrical Current

Accommodations: In Cuba groups stay in the modest guesthouse at Martin Luther King Jr. Center. Accommodations in the countryside may be more basic than those in the major cities. Under these circumstances, you may not always have access to hot water or standard mattresses. We are confident that this experience will enhance your understanding of the country in a challenging, experiential manner.

Electrical Current: The electrical current in Cuba varies greatly. Some sockets are the same as in the U.S. (110 volts, 60 cycles), but sometimes newer ones take 220, so it is good to check first before plugging anything in. Although sockets there usually accept both continental European (round) and U.S.-style (flat) plugs, some outlets cannot accommodate a grounding prong or wide flange. If you are bringing electrical appliances, you will need to bring a two-prong adapter to fit any outlet with two narrow slots.

[Return to top](#)

Safety and Security

Your safety is our highest concern. Since 1982, more than 10,000 people have participated in CGE travel seminars. CGE has thus gained a great deal of experience with group travel, and having in-country partners helps to ensure an understanding of the situation and realities of Cuba. CGE will not hesitate to cancel a trip should something occur that would make it appear to be unsafe to travel to a specific country or area.

For up-to-date CGE Safety Notices and Information please visit:

<http://www.augsburg.edu/global/about/safety.html>

Out of our extensive experience we have developed the following guidelines for you to observe before and during your travel seminar. These guidelines come out of important safety, security and cultural concerns. At times, the reasons for these guidelines may not always seem obvious to you. Keep in mind that following these guidelines helps to ensure the safety of travel seminar participants, staff and resource people. In addition, it enhances the group's educational experience and fosters long-term relationships of trust and mutual respect which the Center seeks to develop in the region.

If all participants follow these guidelines, it means less inconvenience for you and the group and less work for our staff. Please read these guidelines carefully and be familiar with them before your departure.

As you prepare for your travel seminar to Cuba, please keep the following in mind:

- Shorts, short skirts, tank tops or flip flops are often not appropriate for meetings with resource people. However, you may use this clothing during your free time.
- Military clothing and hats could be mistaken for military apparel and should not be taken on the trip. Apparel with U.S. patriotic messages or symbols (such as conspicuously displayed flags) could provoke aggressive responses and should be left at home.
- Bring a small lock for your bag. You should also bring a money belt that can be hidden under your clothes in which to keep your money and important documents.
- Please do not bring flashy jewelry. Any expensive jewelry or watches, or any that looks expensive, should be left at home.
- Bring a pair of closed-toed, flat, non-athletic shoes for factors and government visits.

If in doubt about the appropriateness of an item, it is best to err on the side of caution.

When you arrive at the airport in Cuba:

You may be asked by the officials what your itinerary and schedule is. If so, simply respond: you don't know what your schedule is (you will receive a tentative schedule of appointments from the Center staff upon arrival). Identify yourself as a tourist if asked; the official purpose of your trip is educational tourism. Watch your bags and documents at the airport, as bags have been stolen before and while loading luggage into the vans.

Do's and Don'ts

While on the travel seminar . . .

Do . . .

- Listen carefully to all safety information during your in-country orientation.
- Keep your passport with you at all times, inside your clothing if possible (unless our staff directs you otherwise).
- Stay close together as a group when you are out in public and always travel in groups of two or more.
- Always ask permission of a person before taping or photographing.
- Be cautious about what you say in public (including airplanes, airports, restaurants and hotel lobbies). There will most likely be people around you who will understand English. Also, North Americans tend to speak in louder voices, so keep your voice at a low level--even when in your hotel room.

- Be respectful of resource people, even those with whom your views differ. This doesn't mean that you have to avoid asking the "hard" questions, just ask them in a non-confrontational way.
- Be respectful of other group members. Before asking multiple questions of resource people, look around to see if other people have questions and remember that people have varied learning styles and may need more time before asking questions. Remember that you are part of a learning community and not simply an independent traveler.
- Drink a lot of water to maintain good health. When the weather is hot, you will dehydrate much more quickly! Our field staff will give you guidelines for finding sources of safe water.

Don't . . .

- Leave suitcases, bags, or purses unattended, even for a minute!
- Handle large amounts of money in public. Know how much you have and where it is.
- Give anybody any reason to rob you. That means don't wear flashy (or any) jewelry, watches, bulging pockets, or expensive-looking sunglasses.
- Disclose the tentative schedule or names of resource persons and groups of which you may be aware. This information should not be given either to "friendly strangers," to other resource persons on the program, or to anyone outside of your group. If you want to ask someone about information provided by another resource person/organization, find a way to do this without mentioning the other person/organization (e.g. "I read before I came that. . .").
- Photograph military personnel or military installations. In many countries, airports and bridges are included in this prohibition. This is true for U.S. immigration and customs areas as well.
- Flush toilet paper down the toilet, it will stop up the septic system. Dispose in waste basket next to toilet.

Your group will have an orientation session upon arrival in Cuba. You will receive additional information and have the opportunity to ask questions at that time. In the meantime, if you have any questions about the information above, call the International Travel Seminars Staff at the Center: 1-800-299-8889.

NOTE: It's likely you will hear the above guidelines again at various points during your travel seminar. We ask for and appreciate your patience with this fact in advance of your trip.

[Return to top](#)

Policy on Controlled Substances

Policy on Controlled Substances: Because of a past incident with one of our travel seminar groups, we would like to bring the following information to your attention:

The use, possession, transport, or purchase of "controlled substances" (i.e., illegal drugs) by a travel seminar participant carries significant risks and penalties for the participant, the entire group, and the reputation and legal status of the Center for Global Education in the countries in which we work.

A participant who uses illegal drugs while on a Center for Global Education program will be sent home at his or her own expense. If the participant is detained or arrested, legal officials in the site of the arrest (U.S. or foreign country) likely will not permit Center for Global Education staff to contact or assist the detained person in any way. The Center for Global Education's responsibility for the participant ends at the time of detention or arrest for drug violations.

United States law prohibits the transport of illegal drugs across its borders. Also, U.S. law does not protect U.S. citizens, U.S. residents, or others traveling abroad who violate foreign drug laws. The laws that prevail are those of the country in which the law was broken.

Please reference the U.S. State Department's Travel Warning on Drugs Abroad for more information http://travel.state.gov/travel/living/drugs/drugs_1237.html

And remember:

- The police and customs officials have the right to search your luggage for drugs.
- In many countries local laws make no distinction between hard and soft drugs.
- United States laws DO NOT apply to Americans abroad who violate foreign laws. Once you are overseas, you are subject to the same penalties for drug violations as the nationals of the country you are visiting.
- In some countries, anyone who is caught with even a very small quantity of drugs for personal use may be tried and receive the same sentence as a large-scale trafficker.
- If you are arrested for drug possession abroad you may be subject to interrogation and/or solitary confinement for up to a year before trial and receive a mandatory prison sentence of seven years to life if you are convicted.

[Return to top](#)